

Record

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Volunteers lauded at pier's dedication

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Volunteerism is alive and well at Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian. Visitors can see — and literally walk upon — a testimony to the hard work and commitment of Mississippi Baptist volunteers.

A brief dedication service was held at Gulfshore May 14 for the newly constructed pier, which extends an impressive 340 feet into the bay.

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, shared remarks and led in prayer. Several volunteers who helped with the project attended. The pier was contracted to Cypress Construction Company between June 19-August 28, 2000. The pier measures 340-by-8-feet, with a covered, lighted platform at the western end. An 8-by-30-foot "finger pier" for docking boats is on the south side. New pier construction cost was \$143,712.

Volunteers were brought in to attach the decking (walking surface) of the pier. The decking extends almost to water's edge and measures 40-by-200-feet. Volunteers used \$14,269 worth of materials. Their work began in early April 2000, and was completed in May 2000.

Participants in the service shaded their eyes from the warm coastal sun. Several people present for the first of three Senior Adult Retreats at Gulfshore this summer strolled along the pier or just leaned on the railing and looked out over the water. Dolphins occasionally broke the surface alongside the pier, to the delight of onlookers.

What motivates volunteers to give of their time and energies for this sort of project?

"I think people are motivated by the joy of participation," said Futral. "Just talk to people who volunteer for projects like this. It's a real encouragement. People should get a glimpse of the impact this work has on the lives of people who come here. It's not just about boards and nails; volunteering is a spiritual event."

Binford and Bobbie Watkins of First Church, Ridgeland, volunteered for the project. "We're members of Campers on Mission," said Bobbie Watkins. "That puts us in a position to do this kind of work."

"We came down to the area to work at the Seaman's Center in Gulfport," said

Binford Watkins. "We worked on the deck area for three days tearing the old structure down. We worked some at the Seaman's Center, then spent three more days putting this deck back together."

Mark Long, pastor of First Church, Glendale, was on the committee responsible for identifying needs at the assembly. "We saw that the old pier needed work," said Long, "so we set that as one of the needs to address. We felt that we could use volunteers primarily to work on the deck."

"Growing up here in First Church, Gulfport, and working at Gulfshore two summers, I knew how important Gulfshore is to Mississippi Baptists. There's a heritage here."

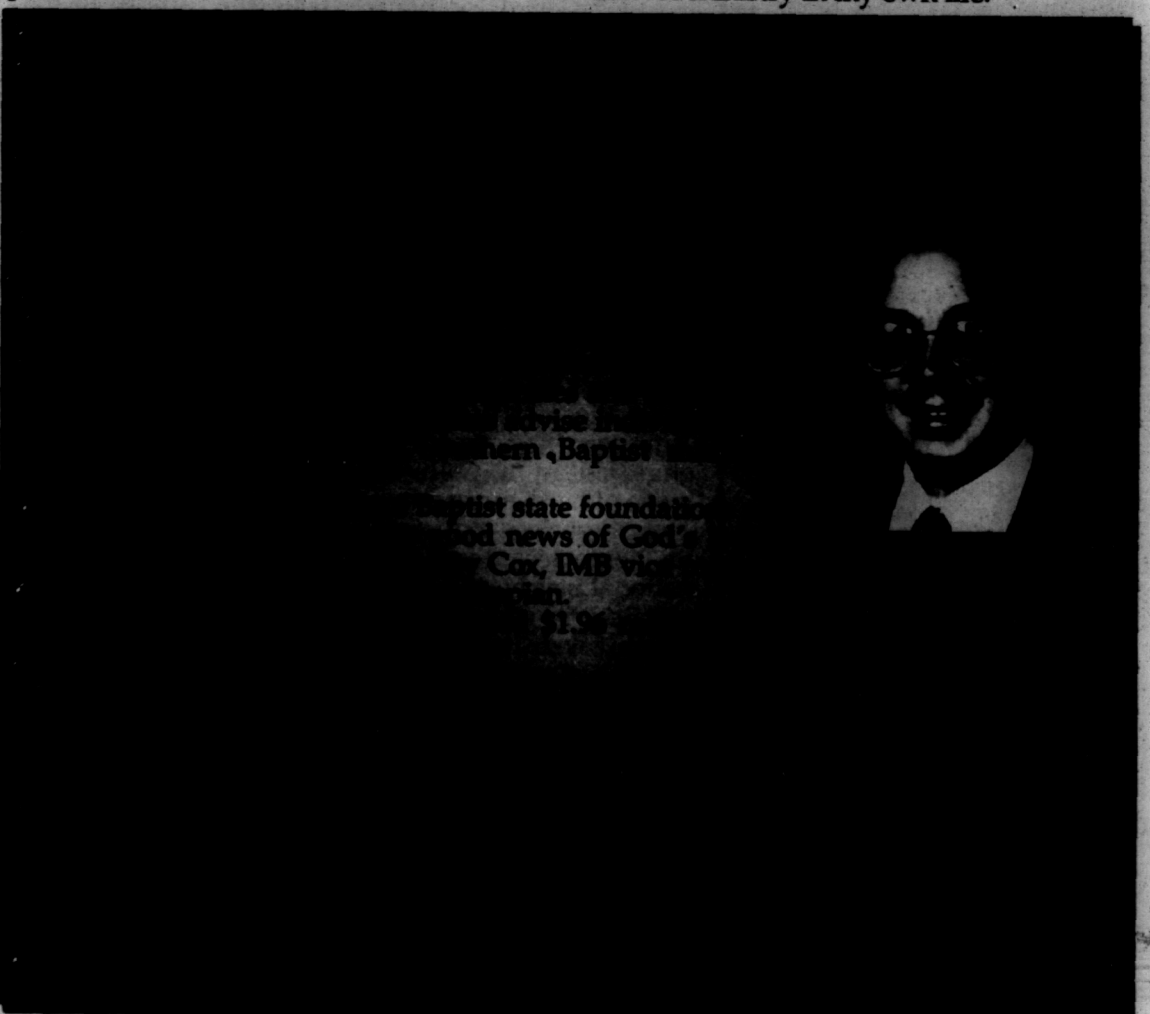
Futral understands the importance of that heritage and the value of camps and retreats. "My retreat experiences go back to my days at Camp Garaywa. I went every year for five years as an RA. It's through that experience that I met missionaries and learned about missions. God used those experiences to lay a foundation for ministry in my own life."



PIER DEDICATION — Jim Futral (left), executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), and Barri Shirley (right), MBCB associate executive director for business services, celebrate Gulfshore Assembly's new pier with volunteers who were primarily responsible for attaching the massive deck section after a contractor completed preliminary construction. (Photo by Sheri Pape)

The Watkinses gave five weeks of work at Central Hills Baptist Retreat in Kosciusko, "doing whatever needed being done." They have done additional work at the Seaman's Center, serving on the ships in port, taking sailors shopping, providing phone cards, and other ministries.

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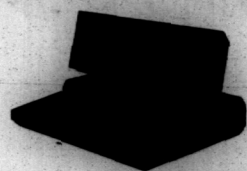
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Here we go again

Scientists at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh called a press conference last week to announce their breathtaking finding that the evolution of mankind has likely been solved for all time.

Yes, these learned people, who spent years attaining advanced degrees and decades searching for the missing link between man and lower animals, have concluded with great fanfare that humanity's distant ancestor is — drum roll, please — a mouse.

That's right, you and I supposedly evolved from *Hadrocodium wui*, a heretofore unknown, 195-million-year-old mouse-like mammal that was less than an inch in length and weighed little more than a half-ounce.

However, the Lilliputian creature had an enlarged brain pan that led the scientists to conclude this was one "smart cookie with an extended brain," as the museum's Zhe-Xi Luo put it.

Luo believes the creature's high IQ allowed it to outwit dinosaurs in the competition for food, survive conditions that led to the eventual demise of the dinosaurs, and then thrive in the 65 million years since the dinosaurs disappeared.

The Carnegie scientists are basing all their conclusions on a single *Hadrocodium* skull recently unearthed in the Lufeng Basin of southwest China.

The skull is "a significant new find," Michael J. Novacek of New York's American Museum of Natural History told Associated Press after the press conference.

"This is important because the first two-thirds of mammal evolution is during the age of the dinosaur. Fossils like this are adding to the clarification of that (evolutionary) branching," he said.

Pardon me, but haven't we been down this road before?

Ever since Charles Robert Darwin published his famous 1859 treatise, *The Origin of the Species*, an uncountable number of otherwise reasonable people have rushed to pledge allegiance to the fanciful idea of evolution — that higher life forms gradually descended from lower life forms over extended periods of time.

Since Darwin's day, there have been many comical events recorded in our

apparently never-ending quest to prove Darwin right.

There was Piltdown Man, which turned out to be a combination of human and ape bones. There was Peking Man, whose bones have not been seen since 1941, and Nebraska Man, the main exhibit of which was discovered to be a pig's tooth.

A few years ago, researchers at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) reported they had found verifiable evidence of life on another planet. They based their findings on what they said were tiny waste particles (to put it politely) left behind by microscopic bacteria on an Antarctic rock that supposedly fell to Earth from Mars millions of years ago.

Tests by independent researchers failed to validate NASA's claims, however, and the space agency was forced to backpedal. We haven't heard much about the rock since then.

One of the most recent examples of evolutionists' rush to judgment was published in the November 1999 issue of *National Geographic* magazine. Author Christopher P. Sloan recounted the discovery of *Archaeopteryx liaoningensis*, another fossil from China that purported to establish an evolutionary link between dinosaurs and birds.

Sloan traveled to Blanding, Utah, where Dinosaur Museum owner Stephen Czerkas has mysteriously come into possession of the lone dinosaur/bird fossil.

"I've seen feathered dinosaur specimens, but what Stephen shows me takes my breath away. Its long arms and small body scream 'Bird!' Its long, stiff tail... screams 'Dinosaur!'" Sloan writes.

"It's a missing link," Czerkas tells Sloan. Criticism of the article's conclusions was immediate. A closer, independent investigation revealed that the fossil was actually a combination of at least two creatures and not a single evolutionary miracle.

"I FEEL I'M IN DANGER OF DELETION.
CAN YOU SHOW ME HOW TO CLICK
ON 'SAVE'?"



Why do we go to such extraordinary — and foolish — lengths in our attempts to prove we are evolutionary freaks of nature or simple biological accidents?

Maybe if we convince ourselves we are a product of evolution and therefore not created in the image of God, we can be freed from the spiritual obligations that go along with divine creation and therefore may choose to live our lives in any fashion we please.

Why can't we just accept the truth — that God spoke the universe into existence (Gen. 1), creating everything there is from material we can't even see (Heb. 11:3) and still don't fully understand?

Let's stop worrying about a missing link that doesn't exist, and start worrying about the millions of souls who need to hear the Gospel before it's too late for them.

After all, shouldn't we be more focused on where everyone is going in the next life, than from whence everyone came in this life?

GUEST OPINION:

Porn: wicked and powerful

By Richard Land, president
Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious
Liberty Commission, Nashville



A study revealed that pornography is at least an \$8 billion a year industry in the United States.

A February 1997 article in *U.S. News & World Report*, for example, stated that the pornography industry draws more money "than Hollywood's domestic box office receipts" and more "than all the revenues generated by rock and country music recordings."

Despite assertions to the contrary, pornography is not a victimless crime or simply

harmless entertainment.

The painful trail left by pornography is reflected in increased incidents of child molestation, rape and sexual violence, transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, and societal values and attitudes that condone and even encourage dissemination of soft-core pornography.

Studies consistently reveal that the largest consumers of pornography are males 24 years old and younger. The proliferation and acceptance of

pornography as normative is leading an entire generation of young men to adopt distorted values about their sexuality and their views of women.

We must not be naive about the impact and presence of pornography. It is in your church, on your street and maybe in your home — and as dangerous as pornography is itself, it is a gateway to even more grievous sexual immorality.

Looking lustfully at a person offends the Lord. It is beyond temptation.

Jesus warned us of the subtle dangers of pornography in Matthew 5:28: "Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

Our sexuality is to be constrained by and conducted within the confines of a marriage relationship that honors God.

Anything else is an affront to God and a short step to the destruction of your family and your marriage.

Prayer needed for China believers' efforts

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — One commentator has described the recent spy plane incident over China and its continuing fallout as the latest example of the ongoing "love-hate relationship" between America and China.

More recent disagreements over human rights and arms sales to Taiwan promise to keep the relationship turbulent.

The two nations admire each other's achievements and eagerly court each other's markets, but they suspect each other's motives and resent each other's power.

"China and its people are looking for their own destiny," says a Christian observer.

"They want to be recognized by the world as a government and as a people, but individuals are still hungry and thirsting for something meaningful in life.

"There is a great spiritual vacuum in China among the people. There are great opportunities right now to share the gospel, but they need to see that God is the God of all peoples and that Christ is the Savior of all men," he said.

Here are 10 specific ways to pray for the people of China:

- Pray for the impact that media recognition has brought to Hainan, and that the Lord will use it to bring Christians there to share God's truth with the people.

- Pray for the Li people of Hainan. With more than one million people, the Li languish in a stronghold of darkness.



RACING WITH GROWTH — The church in China is growing at a rate of one million new believers per month, according to one estimate, but the national birthrate is 1.7 million per month. Will these children of Shanghai ever hear the Gospel? (BP photo)

Their traditional appearance and customs have been laid aside by many of the current generation, but they remain an ethnic minority group separate from the Han majority. Fewer than one percent are Christian.

Pray that the Lord will call out workers to bring the Li the good news of Jesus Christ. Fully one-third of Hainan's population consists of minorities. Another is the Miao, who worship household spirits.

Pray that they too will see the true light of the Savior. The Li and Miao are two of more than 450 ethnic minorities in China, who total more than 100 million people.

- Pray for the majority Han Chinese of Hainan. Many have experienced greater wealth and physical comfort than their provincial neighbors. Pray that they will not use wealth as a crutch to reject the gospel.

- Pray for the salvation of people in Haikou and Sanya, large cities on Hainan. Both represent the lostness still prevalent throughout much of the island.

Pray that the Lord will raise up vibrant networks of believers in these cities.

- Pray for the salvation of millions of rootless farmers who are moving into China's teeming cities.

This year alone more than 10 million people (3,000-plus per day, every day) will leave poverty-stricken rural areas in

search of any kind of work.

They are open to new ideas, relationships, and the Gospel.

- Pray that the current tensions between the United States and China will not have a negative impact on ongoing Christian efforts throughout China, but rather open additional doors of opportunity.

Pray that volunteers who plan to spend this summer in China to share the love of Jesus will not be shaken by the situation, but will sense the peace and assurance only God can provide.

- Pray for spiritual fruit from the many recent Easter-related evangelistic activities in China, including Easter parties, worship services, and screenings of the "Jesus" film.

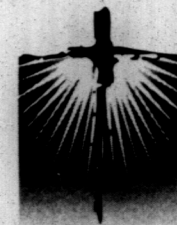
Ask God to lead many people to himself as a result of these celebrations in churches, homes, schools and parks.

- Pray for the many Chinese Christians now training to go to unreached people groups and cities with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

In one recent instance, church leaders from an ethnic minority underwent a month of intensive church-planting training in order to share the Gospel with another virtually unreached minority.

Pray also with church leaders in China, who envision tens of thousands of Chinese Christians committing themselves to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth in an effort to reach out to their countrymen and beyond.

Pray that Chinese believers will continue to be faithful to the vision God has given them to evangelize unreached people groups within China, and then to extend beyond their own borders to other countries and regions.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

**THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE**

Record

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WANDERING — Millions of farmers, like this man in Shandong Province, are moving into China's cities in search of work and a better life. This year alone more than 10 million people (3,000-plus per day) will leave poverty-stricken rural areas of China. They are open to new ideas, relationships, and the Gospel. (BP photo)

Chinese evangelists on move

BEIJING (BP) — Lay evangelists from numerous house churches in China are not alone as they direct their efforts toward unreached people groups and cities with the gospel. As these church planters systematically begin their outreach, they do so with the support of the churches that have commissioned them for the task and the supervision of house church leaders. Their home churches, in fact, take care of their families during the months they are involved in this vital task. Families support their husbands and fathers during the months of separation by sending messages of encouragement, telling the church planters not to worry about home life, to commit themselves fully to the task. In one recent instance, a leader from a family evangelistic ministry in China was away from home for a month of intensive training.

Looking back

10 years ago

U.S. President George H.W. Bush responds to an invitation from Southern Baptist Convention leaders and agrees to address the closing session of the convention's annual meeting June 6 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta.

20 years ago

A 23-member medical mission team from Carterville Church, Pearl, travels to Honduras to work with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Herrington, independent missionaries in the capital of Tegucigalpa. The medical team treats 1,504 patients and fills more than 4,500 prescriptions.

50 years ago

Earl Waldrup, secretary of the Visual Aids Service of the Sunday School Board, announces that Bible on the Table, the first Broadman film, will be ready for a premier showing at the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference prior the convention's June annual meeting in San Francisco.

Lesson writers announced for June - August

Kathy Alford of McComb and Harold Simmons of Grenada have been selected to write The Baptist Record's Sunday School commentaries for June-August 2001.

Alford, who is writing the Family Bible Study commentary this quarter, is a native of Tylertown. She is employed in a wide range of fields, including keeping books for the district attorney's office, freelance writing and editing, and owning an Internet business.

"My most fulfilling labor, the one that pays the highest dividends, is teaching fifth grade Sunday School at First Church, McComb," said Alford. "What a reward it is to see young people eager to know God and growing in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Simmons will be writing the

Explore the Bible commentary. He is a native Tennessean and is pastor of Hebron Church, Grenada. He is a graduate of Union University in

Simmons

Jackson, Tenn., and New Orleans Seminary, and was the pastor of churches in Tennessee, Louisiana, and Mississippi before entering the U.S. Air Force as a chaplain. After retirement, he pastored McLain Church, Memphis.

Simmons has written articles for Biblical Illustrator, which is published by Lifeway Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. He has also previously written the Sunday School lessons for The Baptist Record.



Alford



CWJC success evident as growth accelerates

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Evidence for the success of Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) is plentiful. Consider these facts about the volunteer-operated CWJC outreach sponsored by the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) auxiliary of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC):

- CWJC has grown from five pilot sites in five states to 157 sites in 35 states in four years. While participation fluctuates from site to site, an estimated 1,500 women are involved in CWJC at any given time.

- In a recent survey, one-third of the sites reported 89 professions of faith: 75 women, 12 children, and two husbands. (Reports from the remaining sites are not yet available.)

This data does not include those who made commitments to their relationship with Christ, although there are numerous stories and testimonies of those who have done so.

- In terms of employment, 47% of participants secured employment during the past year. Some sites record a 100% employment rate for participating women. CWJC is more than statistics, however. It's also about relationships.

"CWJC has been successful because it does what Jesus teaches Christians to do — love your neighbor," said Frances Shaw, chair of the CWJC National Advisory Council and director of the Florida Baptist Convention's women's missions and ministries department.

"Each woman becomes involved in one-to-one encounters with numerous individuals committed to walk alongside her as she develops life skills as well as work skills," Shaw said.

"The ministry shares God's love [and] helps a woman accept herself and become self-sufficient."

Sheila Rogers of Dallas would agree. She is a graduate of the Dallas CWJC site operated by the Dallas Association. Her story was featured in a Dallas Morning News article on Jan. 23 of this year.

Rogers was a drug addict who overcame her addiction through her relationship with God. After almost three years in a rehab house, she turned to CWJC to help her rebuild her self-esteem and fine-tune her job skills.

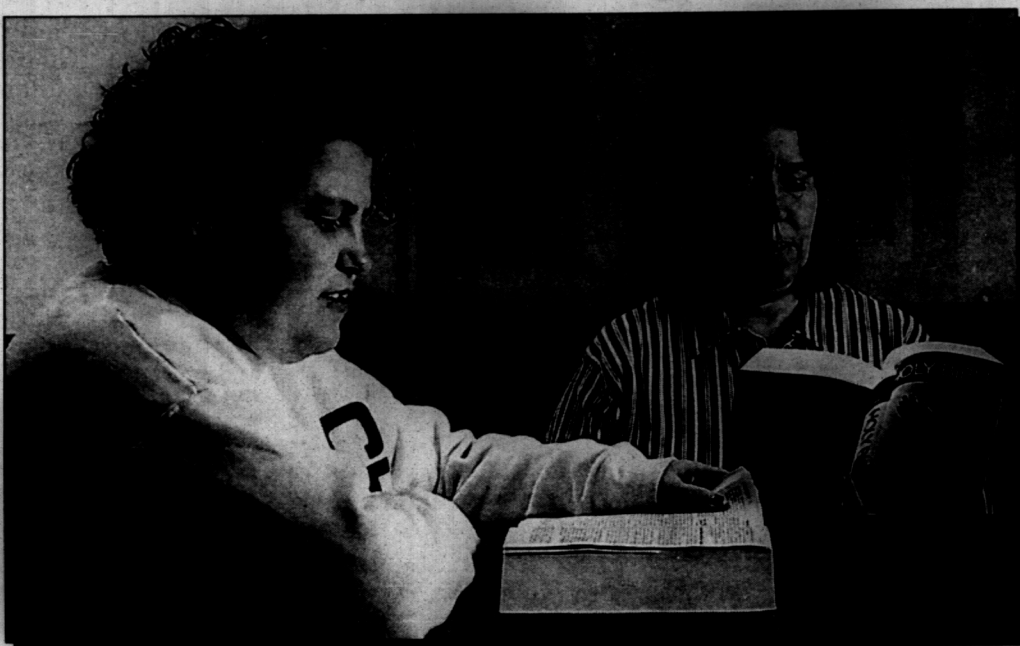
That was two years ago. Today, she works for a furniture company in Dallas scheduling delivery appointments.

"I hadn't worked in 12-and-a-half years and my self-esteem was at an all-time low," Rogers told the Dallas Morning News. "The job corps made me realize that I do have value and they helped me to build my self-esteem and be more confident in myself."

Rogers' story can be told hundreds of times over, thanks to the commitment of thousands of volunteers who work in the ministry at the local level, said Trudy Johnson, CWJC director at WMU headquarters in Birmingham, Ala.

"The primary strength of the ministry is the commitment of site coordinators, mentors, volunteers, instructors and churches who work together in a ministry or CWJC program," Johnson said.

"Their partnership creates a safe and



SCRIPTURE AND TRAINING — Bible study, as exhibited by these Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) participants, is a foundational element of CWJC, a ministry of the national Woman's Missionary Union. (WMU photo)

inviting place for these women to come and learn about themselves and improve their skills.

"Most important," she added, "they learn about God and his love for them through Bible study and their relationships with the Christian women who serve as their mentors."

Johnson's overview was underscored by members of the CWJC National Advisory Council, who met in early March for their annual meeting.

Their evaluations said the ministry is "strongly mobilizing volunteers to be on mission by meeting the needs of poor women throughout the United States."

The success of CWJC continually opens new doors of opportunity for the ministry, Johnson noted.

Begun by definition as a ministry to "women in need," CWJC quickly grew beyond serving communities as a "wel-

fare-to-work" type of ministry, to include women who are part of the growing number of America's working poor and their families.

Then in Orlando, Fla., the ministry was taken to women in the adult entertainment industry.

That ministry has been hugely successful in rescuing women from the adult entertainment industry lifestyle, and other sites are currently in development based on this model.

During 2001, a pilot project at the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women in Baton Rouge will be implemented by chaplain Gary Sumrall.

Called "CWJC: Behind and Beyond Bars," screened inmates will have opportunity to participate

in CWJC for six months prior to their release, followed by an additional 12 months after their release.

Sumrall believes the ministry could "put me out of a job." Speaking to the March meeting of the CWJC advisory council, he explained that his prison has an 85 percent return rate of offenders.

He said he believes the return rate will decrease drastically when these women are trained for life outside of prison.

"Christian Women's Job Corps can give these women the skills and support to start a new life when they are released instead of returning to the one that sent them to prison," Sumrall said.

For more information on Christian Women's Job Corps, contact Trudy Johnson at P.O. Box 830010, Birmingham, AL 35283-0010. Telephone: (205) 991-4972. E-mail, tjohnson@WMU.org. Web site: www.WMU.com.

Five steps for launching CWJC

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Assessing the need for and tallying up available resources is the starting point in five key steps for launching a local Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) ministry:

- Assess the need. Could Christian Women's Job Corps contribute something to the lives of women that other service agencies in your community do not provide?

At a CWJC center, women are mentored in life skills and job readiness training, but they also are taught the Bible. They learn of God's love and how much their Christian sisters care for them.

Are there women in your community who need a "hand up" instead of a "hand-out"? If so, CWJC might be the answer.

- Count the cost. Is there a woman willing to take on the task of site coordinator on a volunteer basis? Are there women willing to commit to mentor clients?

Will Southern Baptist churches in the area (other denominations may be willing to join in as well) make a monetary commitment to the ministry? Is there a place available to use as a center?

Each of these resources may take time to locate, but these are a few of the elements necessary for getting established.

- Attend training. Certification training for the site coordinator is required. Woman's Missionary Union offers the training in several cities throughout the year.

Contact Trudy Johnson, national director for CWJC, at Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham, Ala., at (205) 991-4972 for more information about training.

- Form an advisory council. People throughout the community in a variety of occupations each will bring a valuable perspective to the new ministry.

Social workers, pastors, directors of WMU-related Women on Mission and women's ministries in churches, professional counselors, educators, lawyers, and business leaders will add diversity and depth to a site's plans.

- Locate and train teachers, facilitators, and volunteers. This may mean networking with other agencies already established in the community, and it will certainly mean lining up volunteers willing to work in a number of areas, such as mentoring, transportation, teaching, leading Bible studies, or guidance counseling.

Current site coordinators report that when women in the churches grasp the potential impact CWJC can make in the lives of women in their community, they are eager to participate.

It usually takes between six months to one year to establish a new CWJC site, Johnson noted. Preparation is the key. The more preparation involved, the more effective the ministry will be when the doors are open to clients.

PRODUCTIVE PARTNERS

Just over two years ago Mississippi Baptists entered into a mission partnership with Ukraine, a former country of the Soviet Union. Now Ukraine is an independent country of 50 million people, continuing to learn, grow, and develop in their new found freedom.

How can a state of 2-1/2 million people be of any help and support to a country of 50 million?

While our partnership is a spiritual connection with the Baptists in Mississippi and with our Baptist brothers and sisters in Ukraine, we are there alongside of them seeking to reach a population that has been covered in darkness for most of the last century.

Mississippians, with a heart for Jesus and a heart for souls, whether in our state or around the world, have come to Ukraine by the hundreds to help.

There are new believers all over the country because you care. There are new churches started in communities where

there was no church at all because you provided. There are young men and women who are being taught and equipped in our seminary to serve Jesus.

As you read this article, I am in Ukraine on mission with the Mississippi Singing Churchmen along with Graham Smith, director of our Church Music Department.

We have come to sing and to share the good news of Jesus in churches, concert halls, and outdoor settings. While it is my prayer that our partnership will be a blessing and produce much fruit, I am especially aware of the things of which we are reminded and taught:

• **We must work while it is daylight.** Jesus told us in John's Gospel, Chapter 9, that, "we must work the works of him that sent me while it is yet day, for the night comes when no man can work."

We have a unique, very unusual opportunity and we must not squander it. The day could come when we are not permitted to share the Gospel in this or other places. To all of Mississippi Baptists who pray, give, go, and participate, I thank God for you as you take advantage of the daylight.

• **We must watch what we are doing.** You sometimes can see, literally, when you are far away from home. We must, as

Mississippi Baptists, stay on mission track with Jesus. That is our purpose and we must not be deterred.

On one mission trip to Ukraine, my associate, Barri Shirley, met a Muslim man who was interested in the missionaries from Mississippi.

The man told Barri that he knew Christians and he knew Baptists, and he trusted Baptists, but he did not trust Christians.

What the man was referring to was his acquaintance with Christians who sought to be a political force rather than a people of God.

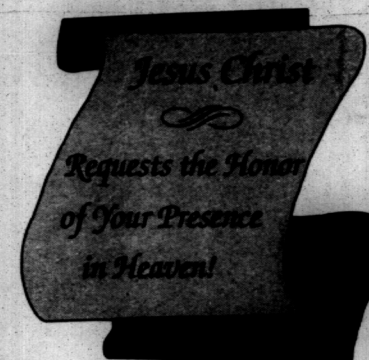
Baptists need to keep in mind that God did not put us here to spin our wheels in political maneuverings, but to share the good news of his saving power.

• **Wait for the Harvest.** We must be busy, sometimes planting, sometimes watering, and always aware that the Lord is the one who brings about the harvest.

It is to that end that we serve, share, and sow so that we might participate in the great harvest with and for our Lord.

Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death.
(I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

MissionsFEST events sharing Good News

ATLANTA (BP) — The Stone Mountain area just east of Atlanta received some sprucing up, and a healthy dose of the good news, as Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) volunteers from 10 states descended on the area.

Nearly 160 individuals drove up to 10 hours to weed and plant flower beds in Stone Mountain Village as part of a city beautification project, conduct prayerwalks and block parties, serve in ministry centers, perform light construction, and visit shut-ins.

Twenty projects were completed, said Linda Hokit, director of Stone Mountain Ministries.

The Atlanta MissionsFEST, which pairs adults with ministry needs in selected locations, was the second such event sponsored by Volunteer Connection of the Southern Baptist auxiliary. Last year Charleston, S.C., was the first location to benefit from the WMU ministry. Little Rock, Ark., and Philadelphia, Pa., will host similar events in June and October of this year.

Among this spring's Stone Mountain ministries:

• At Indian Creek Church, volunteers helped Joe and Margaret Coon in the church's ministry center. They updated a database, sorted clothes, worked with children who attend the Indian Creek Christian School, and conducted a block party.

• Over at the Memorial Drive Center, volunteers ministered alongside Reggie Robbins to organize a clothing closet, make visits in the community, and conduct a prayerwalk outside a crack house. They also completed yard work and spruced up a prayer garden.

• At Stewart Center, volunteers helped Alice White paint a home in the neighborhood and provided other ministry services. "One volunteer wrote in her evaluation that she really received a picture of what



GETTING ORGANIZED — Members of the WMU from Rocky Creek Church in Greenville, S.C., help organize a new clothes closet at Clarkston Church in suburban Atlanta. The women were among 158 volunteers from 10 states who participated in MissionsFEST sponsored by national WMU. (Photo by Joe Westbury)

the life of an inner-city missionary is all about," Hokit said.

• At Clarkston Church, volunteers from South Carolina helped Pat Maddox, director of Friends of Refugees, organize the beginnings of a thrift shop during the day and tutored children from Bosnia in the afternoon.

Throughout the weekend the volunteers could easily be seen as they ministered in their bright red, yellow, and blue Volunteer Connection T-shirts. They shared the gospel as residents stopped to ask them where they were from and what they were doing.

In addition to the ministry projects, the volunteers also participated in two worship rallies. At the rally, Barbara Curnutt, Georgia WMU executive director-treasurer, summed up the reason for Baptist men and women to be on mission.

"There is a definite relationship between joy and servanthood," she said. "If indeed Jesus performed the role of a servant and if indeed he modeled an attitude toward life that was self-giving, we should do likewise. Jesus said, 'Look at me, watch what I do.'

"We need to remember that a person who best honors God is a person who is prepared to stoop and serve. We are called to a life of obedience and fellowship with the suffering servant.

"We have been called to be servants, not celebrities."

There were plenty of servants in town for the weekend. As she weeded a flowerbed in downtown Stone Mountain Village, Mary Billingsley of Pauline Church in Morven, Ga., expressed why she gave her weekend to mission service.

"I'm here because of what the Lord has done in my life. He's brought me through a battle with leukemia and has given me extra time on earth to see the birth of my first grandchild.

"He gives me strength to continue each day, and I want to share that with anyone who asks why I am here."

As Billingsley pulled weeds from the dry soil, Ted and Martha Marcum from Spring Valley (Ohio) Church prayerwalked in the distance.

"We are here because this is where we felt God wanted us to be — out of the church building and into the world, doing missions. We are a very small church and we feel like this experience will motivate others in our congregation to go on future mission trips," said Ted Marcum.

After sharing a tract with a mother and child sitting in the shade of a large oak tree, Barbara Cass of College Road Church in Ocala, Fla., took a break from her prayerwalk to explain her reason for being away from the comforts of home.

"We just got tired of talking about missions and wanted to branch out and actually do something," Cass said.

For more information on the June and October MissionsFEST projects, call Volunteer Connection at (205) 991-4097 or visit www.wmu.com/ministry/volunteer/missionsfest.html.



Roseland Park Church, Picayune, recently honored Diana Frierson on her 20th anniversary as church secretary. Frierson was presented with a bouquet of roses, a framed picture, and a Christian cruise. A former pastor, Gene Smith of Katy, Tex., was the guest speaker. Pictured (from left) are Melvin Kuhlmann, personnel committee chairman; Frierson; and John G. Brock, pastor.

James Crawford was recognized on his 80th birthday by his fourth grade Sunday School class at First Church, Jackson. Crawford, pictured with members of his fourth grade Sunday school class, has been teaching Sunday School for 52 years.

Benjamin Josh Ross was licensed to the ministry by Olive Branch Church, Axtell, Tex., on May 20. Ross serves as associate youth minister at Olive Branch Church. He was a member of Center Ridge Church, DeKalb, before moving to attend Baylor University in Waco, Tex. Rex Bland is pastor of Olive Branch Church.



Crawford and the fourth grade Sunday School class of First Church, Jackson

Chad Logan was recently ordained to the ministry at Old Union Church, Shannon. He is music director and associate pastor at Old Union Church.

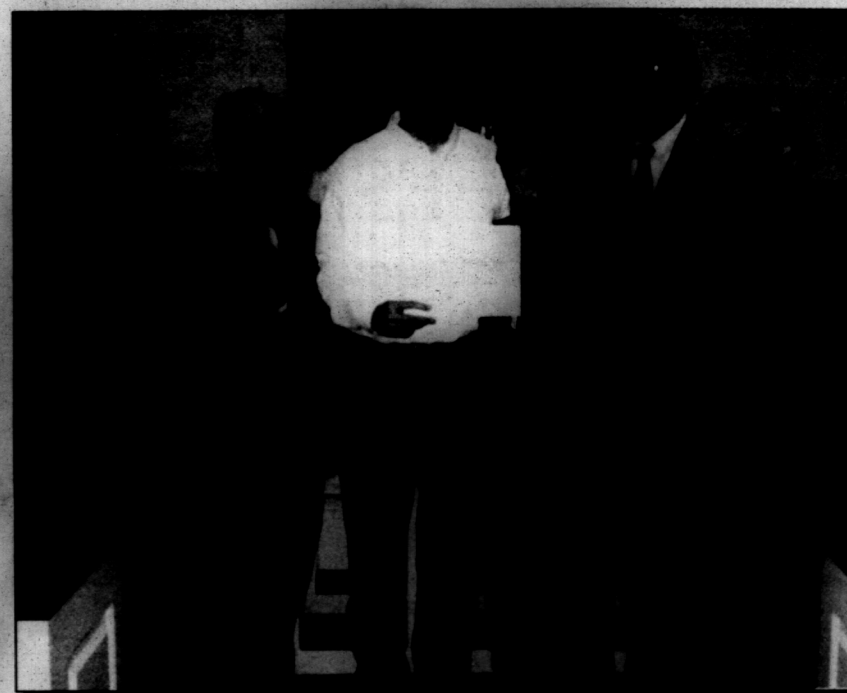
Pictured (from left) are Kenneth Kelly, pastor; Logan; and Don McCain, Logan's father-in-law.



Kelly, Logan, and McCain

Fairview Church, Indianola, ordained Daniel Kunefke as deacon on March 4. Pictured (from left) are Max Hodges, chairman

of deacons; Stacey Blake, pastor; Kunefke and his wife Elizabeth; and C.H. and Janice Kunefke, parents of Daniel Kunefke.



Hodges, Blake, and The Kunefkes

Daniel Church hosts summer celebration

Daniel Memorial Church, Jackson, will host Summer Celebration — First Mondays, at 7 p.m. on June 4, July 2, and August 6. Guest speaker for June 4 is Kermit McGregor, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and pastor of First Church, Mendenhall. Slated to speak on July 2 is Hal Kitchings, pastor of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton. Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, will be the speaker on August 6. For more information, contact the church at (601) 376-4100. Church web site: www.daniel-baptist.org.

REVIVAL DATES

Crossroads (Newton): June 3-6; Sunday, church dedication service, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon., youth service, 6 p.m., regular service, 7 p.m.; Tues.-Wed. 7 p.m.; Frank Harmon, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, evangelist; Pat Nations, pastor.

Park Haven, Laurel: June 10-13; Sunday, 10:35 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Tues., 7 p.m.; Wed., 7 p.m. followed by dinner; D.J. Benson, Salem Heights Church, evangelist; Ronnie Cottingham, music evangelist; Jim Balliet, pastor.

Unity, Georgetown: June 1-3; Fri.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.; Harold McLendon, Gallman Church, guest speaker; Jerome McLendon, pastor.

Mt. Carmel, Edinburg: June 3-8; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.;

Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Matt DeBord, Carthage, speaker; Keith Fulton, pastor.

Coila, (Carroll): May 31-June 3; Thurs.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. followed by lunch in the fellowship hall; afternoon singing; Donnie Guy, Gulfport, evangelist.

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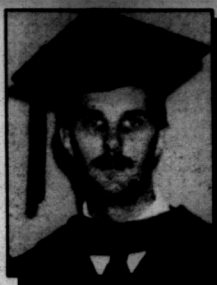
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David Earl Robinson was ordained to the ministry on April 22 by Beulah Church, Newton County. Robinson is pastor of Rock Creek Church in Newton County. Pictured (from left) are Bill Freeman, pastor of Mt. Nebo Church, Newton County; Byron Howell, pastor of Beulah Church; Robinson; and Robinson's wife Sonya.

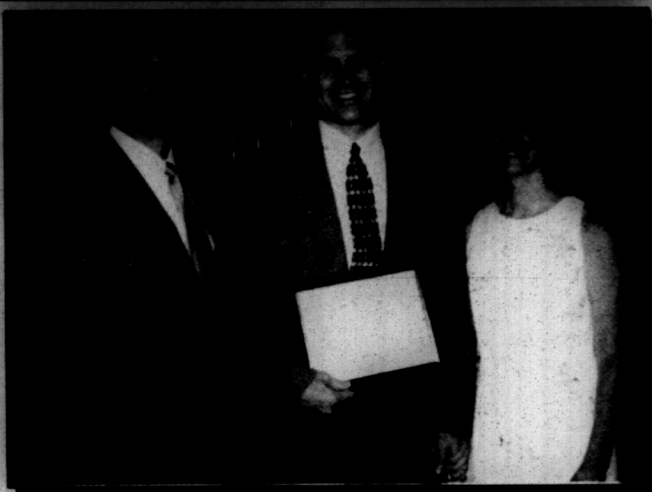


Tutor sonville

Sean Tutor Sr., pastor of Oakland Church, Walnut, has received his masters of theology degree from Anderson

Seminary, Camilla, Ga.

First Church, Kosciusko, ordained David Hudson (center) as deacon on May 13. Pictured with Hudson are Barry C. Corbett (left), pastor and Hudson's wife Christy.



Corbett and the Hudsons



Freeman, Howell, and the Robinsons

William Carey College honors top theatre, communication students

The William Carey College (WCC) department of theatre and communication recently honored students at its 2001 Awards Dinner on the Hattiesburg campus.

Zack Brown, a senior theatre major from Tupelo, received the theatre's highest award, Most Valuable Member of Serampore Players, as well as a technical achievement award for lighting designs. Emanuel Buckley, a senior theatre major from Hattiesburg, received the Joe DeKalb Roberts Memorial Award.

Amanda Bass, a history major from Ft. Walton Beach, Fla., was presented a debate award. Karen Bowlby, a sophomore theatre major from Zachary, La., was award-

ed the Bob Crumpton Memorial Scholarship.

Joseph Brack, a senior theatre major from Whitman, Mass., received an Acting Achievement Award and was recognized with a citation for achievement in technical theatre for costume design. Denise Cagan, a junior theatre major from Carriere, and Clint Thompson, a sophomore theatre major from Columbia, were awarded the Joyce Quave Roberts Memorial Scholarship.

Samantha Cottrell, a senior biology major from Crystal Springs, received the Director's Award for Forensics. Frankie Glennis, a senior communication major from Summit, was recognized with a debate award.

Chad Hampton, a junior communication major from Brandon, was recognized with an Achievement in Public Address Award. Jarrod Hegwood, a senior theatre major from Hammond, La., received an Acting Achievement Award.

Jonathan Hill, a junior theatre major from Southaven, was awarded the Mark Wilkinson Memorial Scholarship, as well as an Acting Achievement Award. Kelly James, a senior theatre major from Meridian, was recognized with the R. E. Cromis I Memorial Scholarship, and a technical achievement citation for costume design.

Kristina Lucka, a junior theatre major from Bratislava, Slovakia, received the Obra L. Quave Theatre Award. Josh Penot, a junior theatre major from Gulfport, was awarded the Doris Schneider Scholarship.

Candace Rose Perez, a senior theatre major from Ocean Springs, was recognized with an Acting Achievement Award. Jessica Pinion, a junior communication major from Florence, received the Novice Forensics Award.

Matthew Smith, a junior theatre major from McComb, was presented the forensics award for oral interpretation. Hannah Wilkerson, a senior theatre major from Huntsville, Ala., received an Acting Achievement Award.

Beth Winter, a junior theatre major from Tupelo, was presented an Acting Achievement Award.

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BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Blue Mountain College (BMC) named Imogene Hardon (left) Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year. Pictured with Hardon is Harold Fisher, president of BMC.

Mississippi College (MC) has received notification that the graduate level counseling and therapy programs offered by the department of psychology and counseling have been awarded accredited status by the Council for the Accreditation for Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). MC's programs in marriage and family counseling/therapy, mental health counseling, and school counseling were each recognized with this status.



Hardon and Fisher

Mississippi College (MC) will welcome new students to the Clinton campus in July for orientation. Transfers are invited July 6-7, and freshmen July 13-14, to meet with advisors, register for classes, spend the night on campus, and learn more about the social, spiritual, and academic activities available at MC. For new students whose schedules prevent them from attending on these dates, another orientation will be held on August 27. For more information, contact Chad Phillips, director of admissions, P.O. Box 4026, Clinton, MS 39058. Telephone: (601) 925-3800 or (800) 738-1236. E-mail: admissions@mc.edu.

Mississippi College (MC) School of Law joined forces with Jackson law firm Forman, Perry, Watkins, Krutz and Tardy, as well as First Church, Jackson, to build a Habitat for Humanity home during a "Blitz Build" week. The idea for the project was initiated by the students at MC Law School, who raised \$11,000 and partnered with the Jackson law firm and First Church to provide the labor. The law firm and First Church contributed \$32,000 for the project.

Mississippi College (MC) recognized retiring faculty and staff recently in honor of their years of service. Those retiring from the college this year are Charles Davis, professor, department of Christian studies and philosophy; Charles Edward Felder, professor in the school of education, department of psychology and counseling; John Wallis Legg, professor and chair of the department of chemistry, and Sue B. Hoggatt, staff member in the accounts payable department.

William Carey College (WCC) senior religion major Benjimen Sessums (left) of Lena recently received a scholarship from the Mississippi Baptist Board of Ministerial Education. Pictured with Sessums is Daniel Caldwell, dean of the Cooper School of Missions and Biblical Studies at WCC.



Sessums and Caldwell



William Carey College (WCC) student William E. Rushing (center) of Fort Walton Beach, Fla., has been awarded the 2001 William Clawson Scholarship for academic achievement by the Mississippi Baptist Board of Ministerial Education. Congratulating Rushing are WCC professor emeritus William Clawson (left) and Daniel Caldwell, dean of the Cooper School of Missions and Biblical Studies at WCC. Rushing plans to attend New Orleans Seminary in the fall.

VBS DATES

Barnes Crossing, Saltillo: June 4-8; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; J.D. Johnson, pastor.

Immanuel (Panola): June 3, 4 p.m., preparation day; June 4-8; 7-9 p.m.; classes for all ages; June 10, Family Night; Jerry Red, VBS director; Eugene Howell, pastor.

First Church, Edinburg: June 2, registration, 2 p.m.; June 4-8; Bible school, 6:30 p.m.; Billy Henry, pastor.

Highland, Natchez: June 9, Fun Day and pre-registration, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; June 11-15, Bible school, 8:30-11:45 a.m.

Wayside, Vicksburg: June 4-8; 8:30-11:30 a.m.; ages three through 6th grade; Larry W. Haggard, pastor.

Faith, Jackson: June 4-8; 8:30-11:30 a.m.; kindergarten through 6th grade.

Bethany, Bay Springs: June 4-8; 6 p.m.-8:30 p.m.; ages three through 6th grade.

Antioch, Florence: June 3; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; afternoon singing featuring the Cases, Mendenhall; Charles Moore, pastor, speaker.

Clifton (Scott): June 3; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; William H. Perkins, Jr., editor, The Baptist Record, guest speaker.

Indian Springs, Petal: June 3; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch; afternoon service featuring FAITH of Petal, 1:30 p.m.; Jerry Corley, former member and pastor of Midway Church, Panama City, Fla., speaker; Jeff Corley, music.

Center Hill, Hamilton: June 3; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; memorial/worship service, 11 a.m.; covered dish lunch; afternoon singing, 1:15 p.m. with The Messengers; James M. Towery, pastor.

Coila (Carroll): June 3; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch in fellowship hall; afternoon singing

with the Jubilettes, Mer Rouge, La.; Donnie Guy, Gulfport, guest speaker.

Union, Brookhaven: June 10; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; afternoon singing, 1:30 p.m. featuring the Joe Cook Family; Wiley Reid, guest speaker; John Fisk Sr., interim pastor.

Smyrna, Hazlehurst: June 3, worship, 11 a.m.; Mike McKee, guest speaker; noon meal in fellowship hall; afternoon singing, 1:30 p.m. featuring In His Honor; Darrell White, pastor.

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JUST FOR THE RECORD

Glade Church, Laurel, will host Trevor Thomas of Trevor Thomas Drama Ministries, Tampa, Fla., June 10 at 7 p.m. Mike Thompson is pastor.

Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, will hold a reception honoring Hal Kitchens, pastor, on June 10 from 3 p.m.-5 p.m. Kitchens recently graduated from Midwestern Seminary with a Doctor of Family Ministry Degree.

Calvary Church, Parchman, will hold services June 3 to celebrate relocation to new facilities and the eleventh anniversary of the church. A potluck dinner on the grounds will begin at 5:30 p.m. followed by a 6:30 p.m. service. W.D. Kirk, retired associational missions director, will bring the message. Members of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, North Central Association, and Mid-Delta Baptist

Association will participate in the celebration. For more information call (662) 647-5350.

Southside Church, Vicksburg, will host Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames, June 3-5 at 7 p.m. Admission is free. Nursery and children's ministry provided. For more information call (601) 631-0047.

GAs, RAs, and the Kids Kollection choir of First Church, Terry, recently collaborated for a combined recognition service and spring musical program. The evening began with the GA/RA recognition service led by Ruby Johns and Renee Myers, GA leaders, and Randy Dearman and Paul Walker, RA leaders. The service continued with the



GAs, RAs, and the Kids Kollection choir of First Church, Terry

musical program Go, Go Jonah under the direction of Kimberly Thompson.

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

William Carey College (WCC) student Kelly James, a senior theatre major from Meridian, has won the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival's (KC/ACTF) national Barbizon Award in Costume Design. Her designs were for WCC's production of And David Danced. For the third time in four years, a WCC student has claimed the national prize in costume design. James is currently serving as costume technician at the Utah Shakespeare Festival outside of Salt Lake City, and will continue her studies in the fall at WCC.

The William Carey College (WCC) Dinner Theatre is presenting the musical comedy, Smoke On The Mountain, nightly except Sundays and Mondays, June 14 through 30. The Taffetas, a musical revue set in the 1950's, will be presented July 10 through 21. Dinner is served at 7 p.m. in the O. L. Quave Theatre on the Hattiesburg campus of WCC, and the performance follows. The box office is open 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday through Saturday,

and seats may be reserved by calling (601) 582-6221. The admission price of \$20 includes the buffet meal, show, and souvenir program book.

The accreditation board of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has voted to continue the accreditation of the Mississippi College (MC) school of education at both the initial

teacher education level and at the advanced levels. MC was the first private institution accredited by NCATE in Mississippi, and joined the University of Mississippi as the second university in the state to hold NCATE accreditation. With the current NCATE accreditation continuance, MC will have provided Mississippi schools with accredited education graduates for approximately forty years.

The Bobby Halford Summer Baseball Camps at William Carey College (WCC) in Hattiesburg will be held June 4-8 and June 18-22 for youth ages seven to 12, and June 11-15 for youth ages 13-17. Cost is \$130 per person and includes individualized instruction, camp T-shirt, and noon meals. For more information, contact the WCC baseball office at (601) 582-6110.

STAFF CHANGES

Ross Johnson has assumed duties as associate pastor of music and administration at Daniel Memorial Church, Jackson, effective May 2. He has served as part time minister of music at Wildwood Church and Daniel Memorial Church. A graduate of

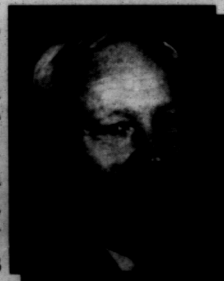


Johnson

Mississippi College, Johnson is a native of Marrero, La.

Ken Hall has resigned as minister to students at First Church, Columbus. He is now serving as minister of music at Brownsville Church, Brownsville, Tenn.

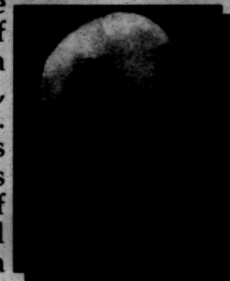
Eastlawn Church, Pascagoula, has called Jack House as pastor. He attended Southeastern Bible College and Sanford University in Birmingham, and New Orleans Seminary. House has pastored churches in Alabama and Mississippi.



House

Charles Dampeer has been called as interim pastor for First Church, West Point, effective May 20.

Bill Bailey has been called as associate pastor of Eastlawn Church, Pascagoula. He has served as minister of music and youth in churches throughout Mississippi.



Bailey

Lighthouse Church, Richland, has called Wesley Hamlin as minister of youth. Hamlin, a native of Terry, is a freshman at Hinds Community College in Raymond. Sammy J. McDonald is pastor.

Parkway Church, Houston, has called Troy Comer as minister of youth and education. His previous place of service was Delray Beach Church, Delray Beach, Fla. Gregg Thomas is pastor.

Frost tapped to serve at NAMB

LAS VEGAS (BP) — Gary Frost, a former Southern Baptist Convention vice president and pastor of Rising Star Baptist Church in Youngstown, Ohio, was elected unanimously by North American Mission Board (NAMB) trustees May 9 to serve as vice president for the agency's strategic partnerships group.

The position gives Frost administrative oversight of NAMB's Strategic Focus Cities initiative, which directs volunteers and other resources toward evangelism and church planting efforts in the nation's largest metropolitan areas.

Also elected at the Las Vegas meeting to serve as NAMB trustee chairman for the coming year was Ken Alford, pastor of Bell Shoals Church in Brandon, Fla., and former pastor of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.



Frost

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Devoted to the King

Matthew 21:1-3, 6-16

By Kathy Alford

Searching for forgiveness. Searching for security and peace. Searching.

Travel with me to first-century Jerusalem where, we are told, we will find what we seek in the Temple by making sacrifice to Jehovah God.

It is Passover season, the day to choose a Passover lamb according to Jewish law. The setting here in Jerusalem is hustle and bustle, not unlike the twenty-first century we just left. No one stands still except a lame beggar, Benjamin, who appoints himself as our guide at the Temple gate.

Even more chaos reigns inside the Temple as money changers and merchants hawk their services. Buyers and sellers haggle. Sacrificial animals whimper their fear.

Because we are Gentiles,

Benjamin tells us, our worship is restricted to this place, the Court of the Gentiles, which surrounds the inner courts where only Jews may go. The swarming mass shifts us with it and our prayers for a perfect sacrifice go unfinished as we struggle to simply remain standing.

"Who is in charge here?" we wonder. "How do worshippers find peace in this pandemonium?"

Passover lamb postponed, we shoulder our way to the street. People are waving palm branches and chanting, "Hosanna to the Son of David," apparently to a man on a donkey colt. Benjamin interprets their words.

The crowd, he explains, is hailing Jesus of Nazareth, a Jewish rabbi, as their Messiah who, they hope, has come to

save them from Roman domination. By waving palm branches they send a political, nationalistic message to the governing authorities.

Branches whistle in the air, in rhythm to urgent hosannas. "Save now! Save, we beseech thee! Redress our grievances, and give us help from oppression!"

Jesus himself is sending his own message by fulfilling ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah: "Behold, your king is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a colt."

"King?" we ask, raising eyebrows. Surely a true king would enter the city on a stallion, not a beast of burden.

The scene would be absurd were it not for Jesus' regal countenance. We see ageless wisdom in his eyes and we need to know more. Jesus observes us and, as if he can understand our quest and the anxiety in our spirits, he nods, reaffirming our need to do what is required of us. Perhaps this rabbi will help us find a way.



Alford

Arriving at the chaotic outer court, Jesus dismounts angrily, turning over merchants' tables, casting out buyers and sellers. "My house shall be called a house of prayer," he shouts.

"Who is this man that he confronts the Temple authorities?" we wonder. Benjamin again explains the Scripture Jesus has quoted: To foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, God has promised joy in his house of prayer, and their sacrifices will be acceptable.

Jesus bends and rescues a small lamb trapped under a vendor's table. As he cradles the lamb in his powerful arms, a tear courses down his face. Time stops. The tableau freezes. Even Benjamin's words hover in the stillness. "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! . . . This is My Son in whom I am well pleased."

In one moment of recognition, we kneel before Jesus. You and I have found all we need: our security and our Passover Lamb, our Lord and our King. God has indeed made us joyful.

What of the crowd demanding freedom? Jesus did free them, not from temporary oppression by the Romans, but from bondage to sin by offering himself as the perfect and final Passover lamb, paying for our eternal forgiveness.

He rode a beast of burden to typify his victorious kingdom of love, humility, and service, thus liberating his followers from defeating self-centeredness.

In removing the frenzied chaos from the Temple, he freed us to worship God, not under the curse of the Law, but in spirit and in truth.

Messianic prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus, freeing us to know him as our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace.

In our freedoms, let us guard against misplaced expectations, clamor, and legalism lest we in turn become stumbling blocks to another's worship and so once more become enslaved.

Alford is a member of First Church, McComb.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Treat others right

Amos 1:1-5, 2:6-8

By Harold Simmons

The studies of this quarter are of Hosea and Amos. Hosea appears in the Old Testament before Amos but the Explore The Bible Series uses the chronological order for the study. Though both prophets ministered in the same century, Amos' preaching preceded that of Hosea.

The setting of Amos' ministry (1:1). Although God is suprahistorical (above history or time), he always reveals himself to man in history (time) for man exists in time and matter.

Amos lived at a specific date and in a specific place. He was influenced by his situation in life as all humans have been. The Scripture tells us that Amos preached during the reigns of Uzziah who ruled

Judah for 52 years and Jeroboam who ruled Israel for 41 years.

During their simultaneous reigns in the eighth century B.C., the most powerful enemies of their kingdoms were in a state of declining power. This fact contributed to the ability of both the Southern and Northern Kingdoms to prosper.

Amos was a shepherd by vocation with a side business of dressing sycamore-fig trees (Amos 7:14). His resume is not impressive. Once again, God picked a most unlikely person for an important job. God is more impressed by a person's relationship with him and their willingness to obey than what they do or have in life.

The audience of Amos' preaching. Amos begins to address his audience by going

to the northeast (Damascus), to the southwest (Gaza), to the northwest (Tyre), to the southeast (Moab, Edom, Ammon) then to the kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

I imagine the amens were going until he came to where the people lived who heard his message.

The message of Amos' preaching (1:2-5; 2:6-8). The audience changed moods from friendly to hostile as Amos moved around from location to location. But give Amos his due, he set the tone of his messages by saying "the Lord roars" and "the Lord thunders."

These terms were fearsome to the original hearers. The lion's roar became a sound of fear for me in Africa. One morning, I stepped out on my hotel room terrace in Ethiopia to experience the town waking by smelling the morning and listening to the sound.

I will never forget the feeling I had when I heard lions roaring. The sound made the hair

stand up on the back of my neck because at the time I did not know if the lions were loose or caged. The experience helped me understand the gravity of Amos' words and the reaction of the hearers who were often faced with lions and who were usually equipped with weapons that would require very close range battle.

We have all experienced the unexpected loud clap of thunder that jolted us from what we were doing to devote our attention to what was happening outside. Amos was getting their attention for what was coming next in his message.

Amos introduced each oracle with the words "this is what the Lord says." This was his authority for what he was about to say. He did not speak what he thought or what some other human told him, but authoritatively and powerfully, he announced the sins of the people who were about to receive the judgement of God for their sins.

In every case, whether the sins of a neighboring kingdom

or the sins of Israel, though the circumstances differed, the sin was the same — utter disregard of humane treatment for others.

In each case enumerated, Amos made it obvious that the cited examples were not isolated situations. "For three sins, yea for four" carries the idea that their sinfulness was more than enough to bring the Lord's judgement.

The message of Amos for us today. America is a prosperous nation. During times of prosperity, it is easier to move away from the teachings of the Lord on how we are to treat other people. It seems nothing for a Middle-eastern country to use biological weapons against people of their own country. Almost weekly in America, we hear that school children have shot others because they were angry about something those persons did to them.

Amos' message to his day and to ours is that God will not hold the sinner guiltless for ill treatment of the people he created.

Simmons is pastor of Hebron Church, Grenada.



Simmons

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THE BAPTIST

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES



A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

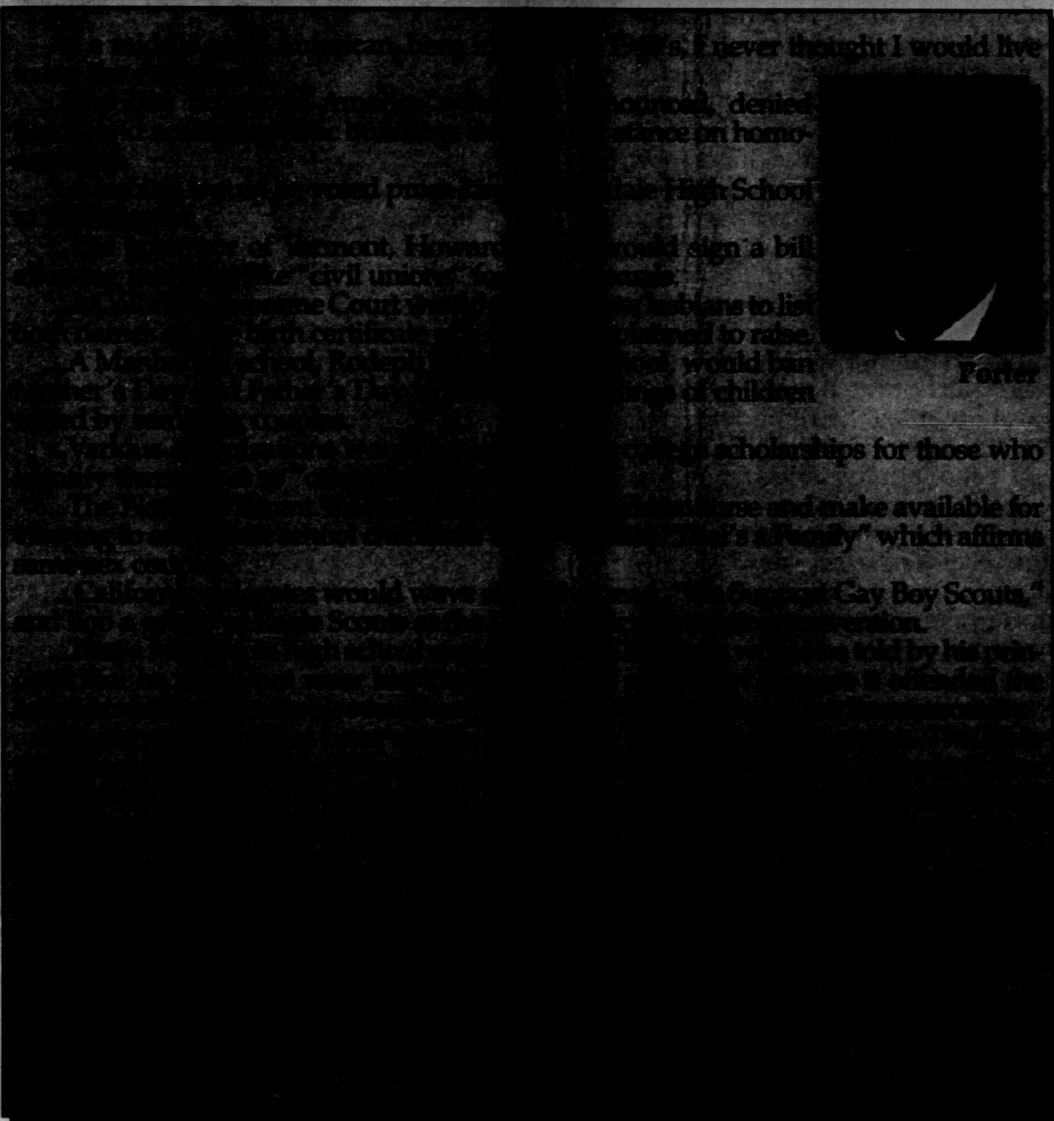
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Promotion of the Homosexual Agenda

THROUGH POLITICS

Hate Crime legislation was designed to create stiffer penalties for those who commit violent crimes based on race or sexual preference.

When a 21 year-old gay man from Wyoming, Matthew Shepard, was killed, the terrible event made front-page news and the cover of TIME magazine in October 1998. Senator Edward Kennedy and Representative Richard Gephardt were among the politicians who appeared with Hollywood stars like Ellen Degeneres at a candlelight vigil on Capitol Hill to mourn Mr. Shepard's death and demand new hate crimes laws to protect homosexuals.

The next year, a 13 year-old boy named Jesse Dirkhising was drugged, bound, gagged with his own underwear, raped, and tortured by two homosexual men. The seventh grader died of asphyxiation. There were no Hollywood celebrities on hand, no candlelight vigil, no New York Times story, no Associated Press story, no powerful Washington lobby for new federal laws to punish such crimes.

Have we come to a time when the media elite is unwilling to publicize crimes committed by homosexuals because these atrocities don't suit their agenda?

Source: Baptist Press, 4/4/01, and TIME.com

THROUGH MEDIA

The following TV shows contain or contained pro-homosexual characters or content:

Queer as Folk	Show	Just Shoot Me	NBC
Ally McBeal	Fox	The Simpsons	Fox
Boston Public	Fox	Spin City	ABC
ER	NBC	Will and Grace	NBC
Gideon's Crossing	ABC	Law and Order	NBC
SNL	NBC	Titus	Fox
The West Wing	NBC	Dharma and Greg	ABC
Drew Carey	ABC		

Source: AFA Journal, 1/2001

These books and documentaries are being targeted to children to promote acceptance of the homosexual agenda:

Heather Has Two Mommies
Daddy's Roommate

What If Someone I Know Is Gay? *Answers to Questions about Gay and Lesbian People*
That's a Family

Source: AFA Journal 1/2001

THROUGH SCHOOLS

California laws like AB 1785 encourage appreciation of "diversity" while AB 1931 allows students to be taken on field trips to educate them on "tolerance and prejudice." AB 1785 will promote the acceptance of homosexuality by shaping the attitudes of school children.

Source: Education Reporter 2/01

The school board in Madison, Wisconsin, will appoint a full-time counselor for gay and lesbian students to help with their studies and problems in coping with harassment and ignorance.

Source: Clarion Ledger 2/28/01

Southern Methodist University (SMU) will offer same-sex benefits (medical and reduced tuition) beginning next year. According to Dr. Morgan Olsen, Vice-President for Business and Finance, the benefits plan was simply a good business decision that will allow SMU to remain competitive for top teaching talent.

Source: Clarion Ledger 2/01

The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) is perhaps the most well organized and potent of the entire homosexual activist groups. In just under a decade, GLSEN has grown from its organizational infancy in Massachusetts to include 70 school districts nationwide, overseeing nearly 700 "gay" student groups in 46 states. GLSEN has become nearly fearless in its mission to erase "homophobia and heterosexism" from public schools.

Source: AFA Journal 5/01

If you are interested in receiving Christian Action updates, please contact us on the internet, and we will send you the information with a free copy of the journal. Please send your address, phone number, and e-mail address to: practical@christianaction.org

Can Gays change?

Psychiatrist Robert Spitzer, a professor at Columbia University led a charge in 1973 to have homosexuality changed from a mental disorder to mental soundness. Earlier this month Dr. Spitzer presented a study to the American Psychiatric Association arguing that some "highly motivated" homosexuals can change to a heterosexual lifestyle.

The gay community along with some of his colleagues has denounced him and his work due to the fact that it does not fit the "homosexual agenda." Yet he is the same researcher and scholar who was applauded 28 years ago. "Is being gay a 'curse' or a 'choice'?" "Can a gay change?" The fact is many have and there are organizations that reach out to this segment of our society. Some of these organizations are:

- National Organization for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality
- Exodus International North America
- Focus on the Family
- Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays
- Evergreen International
- Transforming Congregations
- International Healing Foundation
- Jonah (Jews Offering New Alternatives to Homosexuality)
- Love in Action

GAY DAYS AT DISNEY

GAYDAY
2001

LifeWayLINK to offer free Internet sites

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — LifeWayLINK, the Internet hosting service for ministries offered by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, has expanded to offer free, advanced websites for Southern Baptist associations.

Each local association is entitled to a professionally developed site with 20 pages, 15 MB of space, an e-mail account, advanced design templates, and additional features. Associations may add extra pages and e-mail accounts for nominal fees.

For more information call toll-free (888) 408-5580. The LifeWayLINK website is www.lifewaylink.com.

Bibliocipher

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UAK EWNLN UANFW-
PHAY NUHK LAXT XRWS,
XRWQ XRUX UPW
FRTOW AWWK ATX U
CRQNHUUA; VLX XRWQ
XRUX UPW NHIM.

OLMW JHZW: XRHPXQ-

TAW

Clue: U = A

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Ezra Seven: Ten.

Revitalization being launched at Ridgecrest

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Phase one of revitalization plans for LifeWay Ridgecrest (N.C.) Center and for LifeWay Glorieta (N.M.) Conference Center was launched during a breakfast and groundbreaking ceremony May 15 for a new hotel and conference center space at Ridgecrest.

LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention owns and operates both centers.

Upon its completion in the summer of 2002, an \$8.5 million hotel at Ridgecrest will have 120 guestrooms and several thousand square feet of conference and breakout space.

At the end of the 15-year renovation plan, older buildings will be replaced with five new hotels. The hotels will range from economy to premium quality. Other plans call for rerouting the Ridgecrest entrance up the mountain around the new Rutland Chapel, now under construction.

Mike Arrington, vice president of LifeWay's corporate affairs division, showed 175 guests attending the event a copy of the master plan for the 15-year revitalization and how it will affect Ridgecrest.

"Ridgecrest and Glorieta are by far the two largest Christian conference center facilities in the nation. We can serve almost twice the number of guests any other conference center in the country can serve," he said.

LifeWay is a nonprofit organization and has never received any contributions from the Southern Baptist Convention, Arrington said.

"Never in our history have we received any Cooperative Program money," he emphasized. "Those funds go to missions. For that reason, we do seek donations from individuals and others who would have an interest in our ministry and what we are doing in this revitalization program."

"That includes grant-making foundations that can help us make the improvements that we need to make."

The projects presently under construc-

tion come out of the LifeWay Christian Resources budget.

Arrington said, "We will ask donors to contribute to this hotel, as well as to future projects, as a way of honoring or memorializing someone."

Built in 1907, LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center has hosted more than a million guests at its mountain location in its almost 100 years.

LifeWay President James T. Draper Jr. told the group that Ridgecrest has had a long history with the Black Mountain, N.C., area, and he called Ridgecrest a "good neighbor," citing the economic impact the conference center has had on the area.

"We have 90 area residents who work here during the year, and the Buncombe County Tourism and Development Office reports that each year people attending Ridgecrest contribute \$36,253,900 to the economy of this area."

"That is not a small contribution. The dollars spent at Ridgecrest reduce the local tax burden by \$250,000."

A major part of the revitalization at Ridgecrest includes the remodeling of existing buildings. During the initial phase of renovations, improvements will be made to areas used by guests. Technology improvements, fully remodeled classrooms, new paint, wallpaper, carpet, tiling, windows, and doors are among changes planned for classrooms.

Other improvements will be made to restrooms, hallways, entrances, and roofs on several classroom buildings.

The first new construction in 27 years at Ridgecrest began March 28 with construction of the 300-seat Rutland Chapel, given by the Rutland Family Foundation, which provided a \$1 million gift.

The Rutland family operates Decatur, Ga.,-based Allied Holdings.

For information about how individuals,



FUTURE VISION — Glenn Wilcox (left), life-long resident of Asheville, N.C., and owner of the Wilcox travel agency, speaks with James T. Draper Jr., president of LifeWay Christian Resources. Wilcox and Draper were at Ridgecrest, N.C., for the announcement and groundbreaking of Phase I of the revitalization plan for LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center. (Photo by Morris Abernathy)

churches, corporations, and foundations can be a part of this revitalization program, contact Stacey Owens by phone at (615) 251-3878, by e-mail at stacey.owens@lifeway.com or by mail at 127 9th Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37234-0189.

NAMB television project released to NBC stations

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Golf fans will get a look at some of the sport's top players, including the source of spiritual strength that keeps them successful even when their golf game is not, in a new television program produced by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board (NAMB).

Making the Turn, produced by NAMB in partnership with Dallas-based VisionQuest Communications Group, was distributed to NBC network affiliates May 22 as part of the Horizons of the Spirit religious programming series.

"We take popular professional golfers and show glimpses of their personal lives, including some of the private struggles and challenges they've gone through," said Martin Coleman, director of production for NAMB's broadcast communications group.

"We show how their faith in God is an essential part of their makeup, both personally and competitively, and as these players share their stories, the natural outgrowth of that is a description of how people can come to know Christ," he said.

The title for the special is based on the point in a round of

golf when golfers begin the return to the clubhouse, often after the first nine holes.

In an excerpt from the program, Larry Mize, 1986 Master's champion, states: "The front nine goes out. You're heading out and there's no real destination. Well, once you make the turn, now you're headed back in. You know you're headed home."

"Well for me, the front nine was prior to 1986. I was headed

out. I really wasn't sure of where I was going. But once I made the turn and accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, then I knew where I was headed. I know where I'm going and I have a great final destination."

Other golfers profiled in the special include Tom Lehman, Lee Janzen, Bernhard Langer, Paul Stankowski, Scott Simpson, Steve Jones, Aaron Baddeley, and Larry Nelson.



JONES JOINS IN — Steve Jones is one of the pro golfers featured in a new television program produced by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) that will air on NBC affiliates beginning later this month. (Photo courtesy of NAMB)

Making the Turn is the third collaboration between NAMB and VisionQuest and is similar in format to the previous productions Driving Force and Hoop Heroes.

The productions begin with athletes talking about the technical aspects of what it takes to succeed. Then they discuss some of the adversities and intense pressures they have faced.

Golfers share how their surrender to a relationship with Christ helped them "make the turn" in their own lives, and how that relationship has influenced their lives.

Larry Nelson, one of the longtime Christian leaders on the tour, says man was created to have a relationship with God. "That is the only way we are going to be truly happy," he said. "Nothing else will fill that void in your life other than that relationship with Jesus Christ."

Ele Clay, television marketing associate for NAMB, said that while the special is made available to all local NBC affiliates, stations decide when they will be aired. In the past, she suggested, contacts directly to local programming managers have been effective in influencing favorable air times.